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NSC BRIEFING

5 October 1954

PROBABLE SOVIET REACTION TO LONDON CONFERENCE

- I. Initial Soviet reaction to London agreements sets short-term propaganda line, but fails indicate diplomatic countermoves.
  - A. Comment calls "attempt bring back EDC under another name."
  - B. Criticizes British, French leaders for ignoring wishes of people, deprecates "sensational concessions by Britain."
  - C. Stresses incompatibility of London agreements with German reunification, primarily for benefit of German listeners.
- II. Probable main Soviet counter-moves will make France principal diplomatic, propaganda target.
  - A. Immediate aim--have French delay final ratification pending further Four Power

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- B. To make talks appear attractive, USSR already "modifying" earlier stands on disarmament, Austria, Germany.
- C. Disarmament--Vyshinsky's (30 September) UN offering meant as substantial concession. Molotov passed advance copy to French, remarked "account must be taken of the German problem."
- D. Austria--USSR presently offering bait to induce Austrians resume bilateral talks. Still insists troops remain after treaty, but propaganda now talks of "limits" on these forces, or total withdrawal under Moscow-sponsored European security plan.
- E. Germany--[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] believe Soviet and East German leaders preparing new formula for free German elections. Soviet propaganda hints this. Ostensible

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Soviet acceptance of free elections principle could revive talks on Germany.

III. These and possibly other issues (such as European security) may mark new Soviet call for Four Power negotiations.

- A. Call could be reply to Western note of 9 September, timed to influence French Assembly debate on London agreement (expected in early November).
- B. Meanwhile, Communist propaganda will nourish French doubts over British and American commitments at London and Adenauer's "self-imposed" restrictions.
- C. Moscow also hopes French opposition to Germany in NATO will jimmy final ratification.

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- D. Soviet propaganda notes that "fact that French Parliament two years ago decided West Germany must not be admitted to the Atlantic bloc will provide a great stumbling bloc... ."
- E. French Communist press hopefully predicts that "popular action" will render London agreement a "dead-letter, as EDC is a dead-letter."